

The Human Side

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES □ FALL 2002

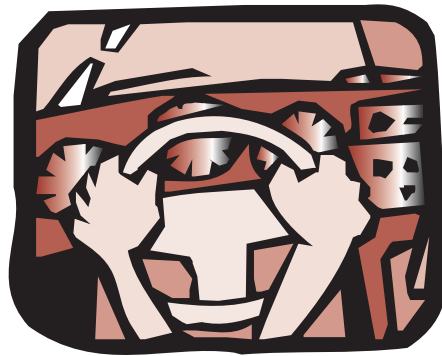
The Georgia Department of Human Resources, in partnership with others, will effectively deliver compassionate, innovative, and accountable services to individuals, families and communities.

DRIVE SAFELY, DHR

DHR encourages its employees to support the Drive Safely Work Week campaign by getting into the habit of driving focused and staying safe on the road. The campaign, conducted by the Georgia Network of Employers for Traffic Safety through the Governor's Office of Highway Safety, promotes the importance of driving safely on and off the job to prevent motor vehicle crashes. This year's campaign discourages risky behaviors on the road, such as distracted, drowsy, aggressive, and alcohol-impaired driving.

"This week and every week, I encourage all DHR employees to focus on the job at hand while behind the wheel — driving," said Commissioner **Jim Martin**. "Our employees are our most valuable asset and DHR cares about your safety on the roadway."

Drivers make more than 200



decisions during every mile traveled, so it's increasingly important to be focused on your primary task — safe driving — while behind the wheel. Follow these lifesaving tips:

- Buckle up. Use your seat belt every trip, every time. Buckling up is the single most effective action a motorist can take to stay safe on the road.
- Drive focused. Do not let anything inside or outside your vehicle take your attention away from your primary task — safe driving. Focusing on driving is critical to anticipat-

ing and avoiding crashes.

- Stay sharp. Being well rested, alert and attentive keeps drivers safe on the road and in a much better position to defend themselves from the drivers who do not make that choice. You need rest to do any job right.
- Avoid aggressive driving. Keep your cool in traffic. Be patient and courteous to other drivers. Do not take their actions personally. Allow plenty of time to reach your destination, plan your route in advance and alter your schedule or route to avoid busy roads.
- Avoid impaired driving. If you are impaired by alcohol, ride with a designated driver, call a taxi, stay where you are, or call a sober friend or family member. Making the safe choice could save your life.

For more information, go to www.netsnational.org, call GOHS at 404-656-6996, or call the Division of Public Health's Injury Prevention Section at 404-463-3472.

— Kristen Lindemer

Giving children our best: DHR programs cosponsor training

The Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) teamed up with Public Health's Vital Records Branch and several other DHR programs to sponsor statewide training conferences during April and May. This year's theme was "Georgia's Children Deserve Our Best."

"Many DHR programs depend on critical information gathered at or near the time of birth to help provide health and human services to Georgia's citizens," OCSE program manager **Scott Stapleton** said.

This is the second year they have held the conferences, which target birthing hospitals, county registrar's offices, county public health departments, and probate judges' offices. About 285 people attended.

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Commissioner's corner

Happy 30th birthday, DHR!

I started to work for the State of Georgia in May 1972, the same year the legislature created DHR through the Executive Reorganization Act of 1972. My first assignment was as legislative counsel for the Health and Ecology Committee in the House of Representatives, and the Senate's Human Resources Committee and Mental Health and Mental Retardation Committee. That gave me the opportunity to observe DHR as it was being created.

The original department included Medicaid, Youth Services (now the Department of Juvenile Justice), housing, and the state health planning office. These activities have been transferred to other state government agencies over the years.

However, the concept of a single human services department is still valid today. DHR was created to provide in one agency the full range of services that individuals, children and families need. The challenge that existed then is the same today: to think comprehensively about addressing needs across division and office lines.

The second challenge, which is most recently reflected in the Family Connection and other efforts, was and still is to recognize that DHR needs partners to do our job. We need to partner with the federal and local governments and other state agencies, and with the private sector — both profit and non-profit organizations. Partnering with the broader community can help us bring adequate resources to bear to solve some of society's most difficult problems.



When I was working for the General Assembly, I was always impressed with the quality and dedication of DHR employees who appeared before the legislature. There was an impressive enthusiasm about the new department in those days. One of my goals as commissioner is to recapture that enthusiasm about addressing problems that have been with us for a long time. One way to achieve that is to think across agency, division and office lines, and to encourage innovation.

After serving as legislative counsel, I worked for the Georgia Legal Aid Society and Georgia Legal Services Program, representing low income groups, senior citizens and people concerned about mental health issues. I had a chance in that job to see DHR from the point of view of an advocate. I saw DHR grow, not only as a government agency but also as a tangible reflection of the aspirations of the people of Georgia to improve their conditions.

I recognize that DHR has a broader function than just delivering services. It has the responsibility and the opportunity to make concrete the visions of the people

of Georgia to improve their quality of life. That puts us in a difficult position. Because of budget constraints we can not always completely deliver, but we should always take those aspirations seriously.

I was elected to the legislature and served there during the 1980's and '90's. I watched DHR react to the new approach to human services on both the national and state level. I was impressed by the ability of the department and its people to adapt to the changing environment. You would think that an agency that has been around for a long time would have difficulty accommodating to new political directions and policy changes, but I think we have done as well as any agency of state government in thinking of new ways to provide services and help people become self-reliant.

Now that I have been commissioner for almost a year, I have observed another aspect of DHR: its ability to respond effectively and professionally to crisis situations — in public health, child welfare and mental health, developmental disabilities and addictive diseases services — despite a declining state budget. What has impressed me the most is the ability of DHR employees to deal with difficult problems and at the same time maintain a sense of good will.

I am confident we will continue to meet our new challenges during the department's next 30 years with the same creativity and dedication to serving the people of Georgia. I am glad to be part of the team.

Jim Martin

We get HIPAA

New federal requirements that protect the privacy of health records will take effect during the next year. These requirements also standardize the way health records are kept so that providers and insurers, public and private agencies, will code and categorize health information the same way. This will speed up communications.

Of course, adjusting to these new ways of handling information will require a lot of work by DHR agencies. Many of us will be involved in making the change.

According to **Jack Senterfitt**, DHR's assistant commissioner and chief legal officer, "Every division handles health information at some point, not just Public Health. Our mental health hospitals and the Community Service Boards, the Division of Aging Service's Community Care Services Program, and DFCS staff who do Medicaid eligibility or check to see if children were neglected or abused look at medical records. Even the Offices of Child Support Enforcement and Adoption may review the insurance coverage or, in the case of the Office of Adoption, the health status of the children they serve."

The new requirements are known as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Congress passed the law mandating HIPAA in 1996, but the process of formulating the regulations began just a few years ago. In fact, final rules for assuring the security of medical records will not be issued until October of this year. "It's a work in progress," says Senterfitt.

"In the long run this touches all of us, because we all have medical records of our own," Senterfitt points out. "There will be more attention paid to keeping our records private and secure, and restrictions on how individual health information is handled and

disclosed. Also, one part of the HIPAA legislation ensures 'portability' of health insurance, meaning that if we change employers we can take our insurance coverage with us."

Some exceptions to the privacy

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A spirited little girl goes to special camp for quadriplegic children

Jill (not her real name), an outgoing and funny 6-year-old who is quadriplegic but likes kidding with her case manager, got the chance to go to a special camp for children on ventilators this summer in Hershey, PA. The camp is one of four such sites in the country.

The goal was to have her socialize with other children like herself and be evaluated for surgery, according to **Lindy Grindstaff**, deputy director, Cherokee County DFCS. "The trip was a wonderful opportunity for this little girl. Surgeons in Hershey had the opportunity to meet her and assess her for a possible lung transplant that would allow her to come off the ventilator."

The child was approved for the surgery but it is an expensive procedure. DFCS is trying to determine how much Medicaid would cover.

The child's foster parent, Michelle Rowe, searched the Internet for resources to make the surgery possible. Ms. Rowe also received help from Kim Morris, a social worker at Scottish Rite Hospital; the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS); and CASA for Children (Court Appointed Special Advocates).

CASAs are volunteers who are appointed by the juvenile court to serve as advocates for children in foster care and to work with the foster parent, DFCS and the guardian to see that the children get the services they need. CASA asked Cherokee Ford for help getting transportation to the camp. Cherokee Ford gave a cash donation as well as lending a van, according to Grindstaff.



A very bubbly 6-year-old looks on as her foster parent, Michelle Rowe, receives the keys to a 2002 Ford Windstar from Dan Parks, general manager of Cherokee Ford, who loaned it for a trip to a ventilator camp for children in Hershey, PA.

— Edna Jackson

Weaving a better web

If you have looked at the DHR home page on the World Wide Web recently, you will have noticed a big change.

DHR has become the first state agency to incorporate its home page into the state's georgia.gov web site "portal" concept. The new portal was developed by the Georgia Technology Authority (GTA) to provide site visitors easy access to information and services of all state agencies at one web site location.

The task is not complete. As you dig deeper into the DHR site, you will still see some web pages in the old format. The state portal at www.georgia.gov offers pages in the new portal format with content about various services and programs in government agencies. Yet most of the state portal still lacks the new web site branding and architecture of georgia.gov.

Webmasters in DHR are working with the DHR portal office to continue the transition to the new concept. Divisions, office and programs in the department are undertaking the changeover in separate projects. In addition to the home page, another project well underway is the "Where's My Check?" project. Like the DHR home page, the WMC web site will have the look and feel of georgia.gov. It will help custodial parents who have applied to the Child Support Enforcement office for assistance in getting child support by giving them information about their application and payments.

In the spirit of the one-stop shopping portal concept, DHR employees now have their own web page to find employee-related information only one click away from the DHR home page. On the home page, click on "DHR Employees." There

you will find links to every page on the DHR web site that has information you may need, including links to the training and conference services of the Office of Human Resource and Organizational Development, to personnel policies of the Office of Human Resource Management, and to Commissioner Martin's "I Hear You" employee suggestion program site.

About the changeover, Commissioner Martin said, "I believe that once an office or division incorporates the new georgia.gov brand and web portal concept on its web pages,

the division or office will be as excited as I am about how much more informative its web site can be.

"Incorporating the georgia.gov brand into the DHR web site will take a lot of work, but it is worth the effort. The framework offered by the GTA through georgia.gov provides a user-friendly way to organize information for the web site visitor. Because web site content is arranged by subject, it is easier for users to find what they are looking for."

The DHR web site address is www.dhr.state.ga.us.

— Angel Rodriguez

Horsin' around at OCSE

The Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) raised approximately \$3,500 at a silent auction held at their annual training seminar in Savannah. Proceeds from the auction benefited Horsin' Around, a Savannah area charity that uses horses to work with special needs children.

Horsin' Around is operated by **Judith Clark**, who retired this summer from DHR's Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Addictive Diseases. She began the program approximately two years ago and until her retirement funded it totally out of her own pocket. She was overwhelmed that her program was chosen as the beneficiary of the event. Horsin' Around was recognized by Commissioner **Jim Martin** at a DHR awards ceremony in May 2002.

Approximately 67 OCSE offices and units made theme baskets with donated goodies that they had solicited or donated themselves. Gardening, sports, relaxing evenings, new baby, and gourmet meals were some of the themes represented. The goodies included autographed merchandise, handmade items, hotel stays and Braves tickets.

Judith Clark can be contacted at 912-748-7917, or 1032 John Carter Road, Bloomingdale, GA 31302

— Gary Driggers



Judy Clark helps Thomas Griffin ride Skipper.

Improving treatment for people with multiple disorders

Many people in the U.S. have an emotional or psychiatric illness combined with some sort of dependence on alcohol or drugs. About 10 million Americans are diagnosed with multiple disorders each year. Multiple disorders are also a problem in Georgia. The Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Addictive Diseases (MHDDAD) is training staff in innovative, more effective ways of helping these people.

Forty-seven percent of individuals with schizophrenia, 32 percent of those with a mood disorder other than bipolar, and 27 percent of those with anxiety disorders also abuse substances. Those with major depression often abuse alcohol, marijuana or cocaine. One-third of suicide attempts are alcohol related.

Traditionally it was thought that if a person with a multiple disorder resolved his substance abuse issues first, then his mental illness would be closer to a resolution. However, practitioners have found that treating a person for one disorder at a time does not work well.

For example, a person using cocaine might be experiencing an intense anxiety disorder. If he is



only in substance abuse treatment, which is very confrontational, his anxiety could get in the way and he might use more cocaine to cope. A person in treatment for depression who also has an untreated alcohol problem might be required to stop drinking in order to take an antidepressant medication. If he was not being helped to stop drinking he might drop out of treatment, which would make his depression worse.

Over the last 18 years, treatment professionals have found that people with multiple disorders need to be treated for all their disorders at the same time in order to successfully recover. To begin practicing integrated treatment for people with multiple disorders in Georgia, MHDDAD has brought in Kathleen Sciacca, MS,

a pioneer in the field of multiple disorders, who is training 16 mental health and substance abuse professionals from 13 organizations across the state in an intense, eight-month course. By the end of the program in March 2003, Sciacca expects there will be 13 new, restructured, expanded or changed programs.

The cornerstone of Sciacca's training is the premise that working with someone who has multiple disorders requires a non-judgmental acceptance of all symptoms and experiences related to both mental illness and substance abuse. A counselor needs to start by accepting people as they are and by not compartmentalizing their symptoms.

Sciacca is training participants in coaching skills, gaining people's trust and encouraging them to recover. Providers are learning new approaches, getting screening tools and outcome measures, and seeing how to conduct groups for people with multiple disorders. They must also report on the progress of the changes they are making in their workplaces.

"Integrated treatment really works," says Sciacca. "People are more likely to attend integrated groups, and they stay longer and have better outcomes. I am very glad the division decided to sponsor this intensive training for practitioners. Not only does it bring people from different organizations in to learn together, find solutions for their organizations and become agents for organizational change, but it also pays off for the consumers. Soon consumers all over the state will get services that truly address their needs, because we are sending staff home with proven, workable techniques they can use every day."

— Iris McIlvaine

HIPAA

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requirements will allow medical providers to continue to share information with Public Health and allow insurance agencies to review individuals' health records, within limits.

A working group representing all DHR divisions and offices will release a report in November on how DHR employees are affected by HIPAA and what needs to be done. Also, a curriculum for train-

ing DHR staff about HIPAA is being developed by a consulting firm. Georgia's lead agency for statewide implementation of HIPAA is the Georgia Technology Authority, which heads up a steering committee drawn from all departments of state government.

For more information about HIPAA, go to www.hipaa.dhr.state.ga.us

— Barbara Joye

Write it right – Lost in translation?



All DHR programs are trying to make sure that the many Georgians with limited English can find out about our services and get our prevention messages. It isn't always easy. Recent immigrants and refugees speak many different languages, and one language may be spoken differently in different places.

How can you find a reliable translator for your written information such as fliers, brochures, public service announcements and application forms? Here's some advice:

- If at all possible, the person who translates from English into another language should be a native speaker of that language. Even people who have lived in another country or earned a degree in the second language may not write in a style that seems natural to people

who grew up speaking that language.

- Look for a translator who is certified by the Atlanta Association of Interpreters and Translators or who graduated from a university translation program.

- Don't just look for the cheapest service. The price is usually from 15 to 28 cents per word. Find out whether this includes proof-reading. One company we use charges about \$125 for a three-panel brochure.

- A list of certified translators is linked to the DHR home page. The page is being redesigned, so if you have trouble finding the link contact **Tony Flores** in the Office of Communications (404-657-4722 or email: aflores).

- A translation firm that employs more than one speaker of the language to check each job is more likely to avoid errors. If you are employing an individual, try to

have another native speaker review the translation for you.

- If the language comes in many varieties, ask the translator where he or she is from. If you are trying to reach a group from just one area such as Mexico, make sure that a translator from Spain, Colombia or Guatemala can write the Spanish familiar to Mexicans. But if you need to reach people from many different places, ask the translator to avoid any one regional style. A good translator can overcome this problem.

- Make sure that photos and other illustrations are culturally sensitive and reflect the population you wish to reach.

– Marian the Grammarian

Giving children our best

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The conference participants learned how important it is to collect data at birth; complete Children 1st screening forms; provide perinatal case management; and encourage unwed parents to sign a voluntary paternity acknowledgment form when a baby is born.

"Feedback gathered from participants' evaluation forms indicate that the conferences were a resounding success," Stapleton said. "This innovative approach to combining training efforts allowed the participating DHR programs to minimize costs and maximize effectiveness."

OCSE, Vital Records, Immunization, Newborn Hearing and Metabolic Screening, Children 1st, Women's Health, and the Office of Adoptions did the training.

– Edna Jackson

DHR celebrates cultural diversity during National Hispanic Heritage Month, September 15 through October 15. This year's poster salutes the Hispanic Health Coalition of Georgia, and includes a list of health-

care, social services and educational programs available to Hispanics with limited English proficiency. The poster was designed by **Tony Flores**, **Eddie Reddick** and **Dianne Phillips**. Copies are available for DHR employees and non-profit organizations, from the DHR Office of Communications.



Who's news

Charlee Lambert, a longtime DHR consultant, has been named the first national honoree of the Rosalie Wolf



Memorial Elder Abuse Prevention Awards. The awards, national and international, are co-sponsored by the National Committee for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse, and the Family Violence and Sexual Assault Institute.

Lambert has been a leading advocate in Georgia and throughout the country for the rights of victims and persons with diminished mental capacity. She is the founding director of Georgia's Council on Elder Abuse and Neglect; managed the state's victim assistance line through the Atlanta Legal Aid Society; served on the Lieutenant Governor's Elder Abuse Task Force and the House-Senate Joint Guardianship Re-write Study Committee; and has served as an expert witness in elder abuse cases. She is also a playwright, actress, director, and producer of plays that educate professionals and the public about elder abuse.

— Lola Russell



The Georgia Public Health Association (GPHA) again honored several PH employees at its annual conference in September:

- Jules S. Terry Memorial Award: **J. Paul Newell, M.D.**, director, Albany health district.
- Al Dohany Award for Community Service: **Cathy Green, R.N., M.P.H.**, nurse manager, Bartow County Health Department.
- Dorothy Barfield Award: **Mary Jo Fina**, public health nurse specialist, Bryan County Health Department.
- Maggie Kline Award for Nursing: **Vamella Lovett, R.N.**, director, Adult Health Program, Dougherty County Health Department.
- Environmentalist of the Year: **Ed Saidla**, director, Environmental Health, Columbus Health Department.
- Georgia Dental Health Award of Merit: **Grier Godfrey, D.M.D.**, dental director, Macon-Bibb County Health Department.
- Office Personnel Outstanding Service Award: **Rhonda Hamrick**, office manager, Twiggs County Health Department.



J. Paul Newell, M.D., director, Albany health district (left) receives the Jules Terry Memorial Award from Joseph Swartout, M.D., director, Macon health district, as Newell's wife, Susan Andresen, Ed.D., looks on.



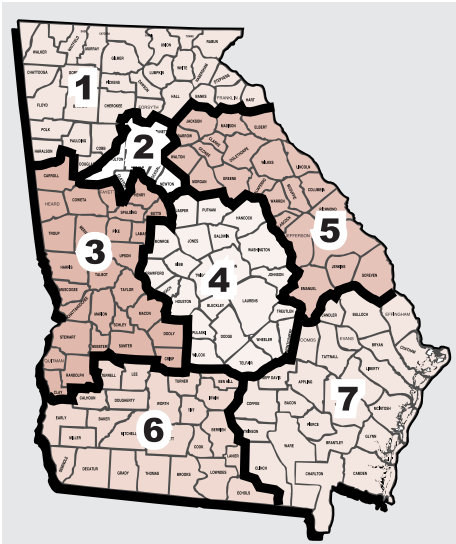
The GlaxoSmithKline Child Health Recognition Awards were also presented to these individuals and public health departments at the GPHA conference: **Ted Holloway, M.D.**, director, Waycross health district; **Jane Garrison**, coordinator, Injury Prevention Program, Chatham County Health Department; **Mary Ortwein**, nutrition program manager, Walker County Health Department; the Gordon County Health Department; the Lowndes County Health Department; **Mary Lester**, HIV health educator, DeKalb County Board of Health; and the child health coordinators for the Northwest Georgia health district: **Nicole Nowell, R.N., B.S.N.**; **Rhonda Holland, R.N., B.S.N.**; **Becky Trew, R.N.**; **Karen Morgan, R.N.**; **Carla DeBerry, R.N.**; **Shellee Draper, R.N., B.S.N.**; **Debbie Cooper, R.N., B.S.N.**; **Marla Frasier, R.N.**; **Vicki Free, R.N.**; and **Pam Pryce, R.N.C.**



The Macon-Bibb County Health Department received the "Award for Excellence in Maternal and Child Health" from the National Association of County and City Health Officials, for Prevention and Outreach for Oral Health (POOH), a community and school-based program for childbearing women and children from birth to age 21. Since it began, the POOH program has improved access to dental and other health services for over 6,000 women and children.



What's news



New regional boundaries for the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Addictive Diseases (MHDDAD) were approved by the Board of Human Resources at its August meeting and became effective October 1. Regional office locations will be determined later.

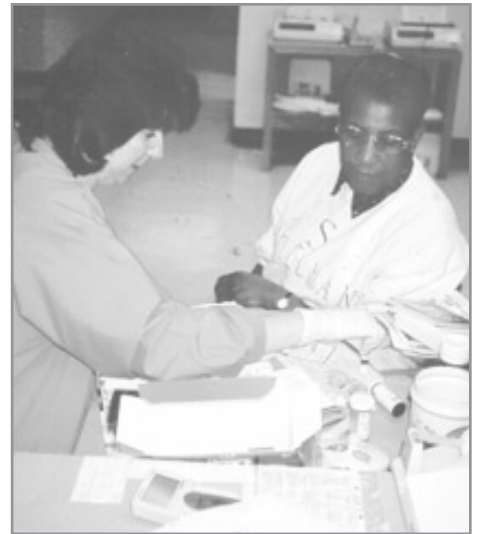
MHDDAD moved from 13 to seven regions to promote better integration of hospital and community services and improve continuity of care for people who move between the two settings. This is one of a number of changes underway to restructure the MHDDAD system as a result of House Bill 498, passed by the General Assembly this past spring. For more information, go to the division's link on the DHR web site home page at www.dhr.state.ga.us, then click on HB 498 under "hot topics."



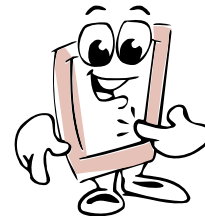
TLC — which stands for Talk, Learn, Cope — is a new DFCS employee wellness initiative, being piloted in nine Georgia counties this fall. This peer support service helps staff relieve stress and support each other in difficult situations. Specialty items using the logo above, including buttons, cups and a brochure, are being used to acquaint DFCS staff with TLC.



A valuable resource: *AdvoCasey* magazine, published by the Annie B. Casey Foundation, 701 St. Paul St. Baltimore, MD 21202, highlights issues and policies that affect children and families in the United States and documents programs and strategies that work. See the latest issue for "Work First, What Next?" — articles on the future of welfare reform, at www.aecf.org/publications/advocasey



Second place winner in the Georgia Public Health Association's photography contest was submitted by Karen Bichel, R.N., B.S.N., Thomas County Health Department. "Teaching New Diabetics and Reducing Their Fears" shows Tiann Taylor, R.N., Thomas County Health Department (left) teaching a patient to use a glaucometer.



Electronic Voting: Coming in the November 5th general election! For more information and to participate in an online demonstration visit www.georgiacounts.com.



The purpose of *The Human Side* is to provide interesting and important information related to DHR employees and their jobs.

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This summer the Women, Infant and Children (WIC) nutrition program gave low-income families who receive WIC benefits special coupons to buy fresh fruits and vegetables at 13 farmers' markets organized by program staff. Sixty-five farmers participated. These two are ready for customers at the market in Rome.

Photo by Rosemarie B. Newman, L.D.